



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY
4TH, STREET SINKOR, MONROVIA LIBERIA



**PHASE II STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION FOR THE OPERATION OF PROPOSED
CLASS “A” OPEN PITS (I, II, & III) GOLD MINE PROJECT**

**IN FAVOR OF BEA MOUNTAIN MINING CORPORATION IN BANGOMA, GRAND
CAPE MOUNT COUNTY**

HELD ON MAY 4, 2024

BANGOMA, TEWOR DISTRICT, GRAND CAPE COUNTY, LIBERIA



1.0 Introduction

Bea Mountain Mining Corporation (BMMC), a subsidiary of Aversoro Resources, which operates three “CLASS A” Gold mines (Weajue, Ndablama and Kinjor) in Grand Cape Mount County has acquired a mining license to operate the Matambo Gold mine in Bangoma, Grand Cape Mount County. Petra Resources, an Independent Environmental evaluator of Liberia, along with ABS an international environmental firm from Ghana, West Africa, submitted an Environmental and Social Impacts Assessment Report to the EPA on February 27, 2024 for the acquisition of an Environmental permit to commence mining at the Matambo Gold mine. An open pit mining method will be employed for the extraction of Gold and the project will constitute three open pits.

In fulfillment of the ESIA Process, the Agency, upon receipt of the ESIA Report, internally reviewed the document and copies of said report were distributed with relevant Ministries, Agencies and Commissions of Government for review and comments in keeping with the Environmental Protection and Management Law of Liberia.

The Stakeholder Meeting, to discuss the initiation of open pit mining in the Matambo Corridor of the Bea Mountain Mining Concession and the relocation of Bangoma Town, faced a delay on April 25, 2024. The Project Affected Communities (PACs) raised certain disagreements and demanded the presence of their elected representative in the House of Representatives, Hon. Gbessay Sonni, before any meeting involving BMMC could take place.

As a result of the PACs proposal, the stakeholder meeting was rescheduled for May 4, 2024, in Bangoma Town, Tewor District, Grand Cape Mount County. This decision was made to ensure that the views and concerns of all stakeholders are heard and considered as part of the ESIA process of Liberia.

The second phase of the stakeholders Consultation brought together Two Lawmakers, Hon. (Ma) Gbessay Sonii, and Hon. Mohammed Doesee, of the Grand Cape Mount Legislative Caucus, representatives of the Project Affected Communities, Ministries, Agencies and Commissions of Government, Civil Society Organizations, representatives of Bea Mountain Mining Corporation, persons of interest, Petra Resources, Inc., and technicians from the EPA.

This second scheduled meeting in the presence of the lawmakers was also unsuccessful due to the following factors.

1. The Lawmakers informed the audience that Bea Mountain Mining Corporation communicated to the Project Affected Communities and the Caucus that they were closing down all operations until further notice; however, the company did not issue another notice of their intentions to resume operations when the stakeholders’ consultation was being organized for the Matambo Gold Project.
2. Bea Mountain Mining Corporation is not adhering to the MOU signed with the communities.
3. Houses built for Bangoma relocation are not up to standard.

Therefore, the Lawmakers along with other stakeholders insisted that the meeting should be postponed until the aforementioned are addressed by BMMC.

The contention began briefly after the Lawmakers requested the objective of the meeting which was an item on the agenda that was executed by Mr. John K. Jallah, Manager, Compliance and Enforcement of the EPA.

Due to the contention, the meeting was adjourned immediately after comments from the Lawmakers, to reconvene any time when the BMMC takes the necessary actions to address the concerns raised by both the PACs and the Grand Cape Mount Legislative Caucus.

2.0 Opening Prayer.

Due to religious diversity, two minutes' moment of silence was taken to give people the chance to pray according to their religion.

3.0 Special Statement and Welcome Remarks:

The Town chief of Bangoma Hon. Boakai Kamokai and welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished God's blessing on everyone. The town chief further encouraged everyone to remain peaceful and informed the audience that both Church and Mosque are available in Bangoma for religious practices.

The paramount chief of Tewor District, welcome everyone to the meeting and urged everyone to feel at home and expressed high desire for a fruitful meeting.

4.0 Overview of the Meeting.

Mr. John K. Jallah, Jr., Manager of the Dept. of Compliance and Enforcement, EPA gave the overview of the meeting. Mr. Jallah said that the purpose of the meeting was to do a full public disclosure of the ESIA report conducted prior to the operation of the Matambo open pit Gold project by the Bea Mountain Mining Corporation in Bangoma, Tewor District, Grand Cape Mount County. Mr. Jallah provided a summary highlight on the Notice of Intent which was published as part of the process to notify all interested parties of the planned commencement of an Open pit mining within the Matambo corridor. He also mentioned that the ESIA process is meant to give the Project Affected community an insight of what the project is-, identification of impacts associated with the project and mitigation option; its benefit (positive & negative) and other expected outcomes. He also informed the audience that the ESIA report was developed and submitted in November 2023, by two independent environmental groups both local and international (Petra Resources and ABS Africa).

Inclusion, Mr. Jallah mentioned that the meeting will cover a Presentation from EPA on the ESIA process, a presentation from the independent environmental consultant on the summary of the ESIA report, which will be followed by a discussion segment to include exchanges of questions and answers.

However, following the presentation of the overview, the meeting was obstructed with series of interventions (comments and questions) by both the county representatives and PACs that prohibited the presentation of the ESIA process and disclosure of the ESIA report.

5.0. Discussion

The following concerns were raised after the Lawmakers along with the town's Lawyer, Cllr, Marvis suggested that the meeting be postponed until Bea Mountain Mining adhere properly to the MOU

	Name	Position	Statement/concern
	Cllr. Marvis,	Bangorma Town Lawyer	➤ BMMC submitted a letter to the project-affected communities suspending its operations within the Matambo corridor; are they coming back now?
	Hon. Mohammed Doesee,	Representative District #1, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ BMMC told the people of the Matambo corridor that they were suspending their activities in the corridor. Have they discussed this with the higher-ups and are they ready to come back? ➤ The buildings constructed for the relocation of Bangorma are not suitable, they look like "chicken houses". ➤ Two families that presently own and live in two separate houses are being given one duplex which is not acceptable. ➤ If BMMC is unable to provide the needed benefits to the communities, then the communities can revert to their usual shovel mining (artisanal mining).
	Hon. Gbessay Sonii,	Representative, Distric #3, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ What are the real benefits of mining in this Matambo corridor? ➤ The relocation process and structures being built are not at international standards.

			➤ Lawmakers (17 in number) visited the Matambo corridor to delve into the crisis at BMMC. ➤ The BMMC letter of suspension of activities and other BMMC issues are on the floor of the House of Legislature pending discussion. Why was this meeting called before the result of the legislative discussion? ➤ BMMC should have met with the lawmakers before calling this meeting.
	Hon Adam Moniba,	Chairman, Liberia Land Authority	➤ The acquisition of land for the BMMC operations in Motambo was not done according to the New Land Rights Law. ➤ FPIC was not carried out in the communities. ➤ Bangorma has an MOU with BMMC, but other communities do not. ➤ Because of these inconsistencies, the LLA cannot agree or be involved with any arrangement that is out of the law.
	Youth Leader	Bangorma	➤ Express his disappointment in the independent consultant firm for not sharing with the ESIA report, but only communicated with the EPA. ➤ He also allege that BMMC is hiding behind EPA, by failing to resolve the Bangorma relocation
	Adulai Massalay	Citizen of Bangorma	➤ The people of Bangorma have become vulnerable due to BMMC's activities, is the company (BMMC) willing to come back?

			➤ If BMMC is not willing to come back to work here, then another company should be given the mining right.
	Daoda S. Carlon	➤ Environmental Protection Agency	➤ The EPA is not aware of the communication in the possession of the Cllr. Mavis, prior to the EPA planning for this Stakeholder Consultation. This is an important revelation to assist in the engagement process
	Mr. John K. Jallah Jr	➤ Environmental Protection Agency	➤ Does BMMC have anything to say or clarity to make regarding the letter of suspension in the possession of the Cllr. Mavis?
	Bea Mountain	➤ Mine Manager	➤ The Mine Manager claimed that BMMC was invited to the meeting by the EPA to serve as an observer.
	Manager John K. Jallah, Jr.	Environmental Protection Agency	➤ The EPA did not invite BMMC to attend and remain mute but to make comments during the discussion proceedings, on issues that may need clarity from BMMC as the project developer. ➤ Following the decision made by all the PACs through the advice of their Representatives (Hon. Gbessay Sonii & Hon. Mohammed Doesee) recommended to postpone the meeting; ➤ Mr. Jallah invited institution of government to make brief statement.
	Ellen Whyte	National Bureau of Concession	➤ The NBC will work with the EPA to ensure that proper arrangement is made with the affected community to reconvene this meeting.

	Hon. Mohammed Dosee,	Representative District #1, Grand Cape Mount County	➤ The NBC failed to ensure that BMMC did the right thing by granting a 25-year MDA to the company without knowing the benefits to be derived by the people.
	McDonald T. Wlenus,	Ministry of Internal Affairs	➤ Agrees that there is need to postpone/halt this stakeholder meeting until consultations are extensively held with all relevant stakeholders before another meeting is called.
	John K. Jallah, Jr.,	Manager of the Dept. of Compliance and Enforcement	➤ Due to all the contentious concerns raised, the meeting is hereby suspended until otherwise. ➤ A copy of the communication from the BMMC suspending its operations in the Matambo corridor should be submitted to the EPA by the lawyer of the project-affected communities.

Most of the questions asked during this stakeholders' consultation were not answered due to the contention from the audience.

6.0 Recommendations

The Stakeholder Meeting for the Matambo corridor including relocation of Bangorma Town was not held for the second time in succession due to contentions raised by the people of the town and their elected Lawmakers, Hon Sonni and Hon Dosee. The lawmakers along with their citizens demanded that BMMC must discuss and settle with all issues relative to the operations of the company in their district before proceeding to the stakeholders Consultation to discuss the ESIA report.

Base on the above mentioned the following recommendations are proffered

That the EPA organizes two small separate meetings with:

- Executives of the EPA, NBC, MIA & Executives of BMMC
- Executives of the EPA, NBC, MIA & The elected representative of the people of Bangoma Town in the House of Representatives, R.L

Joint meeting

- Executives of the EPA, NBC, MIA, Executives of BMMC and the elected representative of the people of Bangoma Town in the House of Representatives, R.L. including few influential people of Bangoma Town.
- a. And that the above meetings be held at the EPA office in Monrovia or at a place designated by the Bangoma people and their representatives to discuss some basic underlining issues that may be raised by the people of Bangoma Town.
 - b. That based on the result of these meetings, a bigger stakeholder meeting be re-organized in Bangoma Town that will include the entire project-affected towns/communities.

Fulfillment of Social Corporate Responsibility

- That BMMC officially communicate to the County's legislative caucus and other relevant stakeholders informing them of their decision to recommence operation at the Matambo Open Pits Gold Mine in Bangoma
- Ensure that BMMC fully adhere to the MOU signed with the Project Affected Communities.